

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 188214
ORIGIN EB-08

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 ICA-11
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DRAFTED BY EB/ITP/EWT:RMUELLER:DJ
APPROVED BY EB:
EB/ITP/EWT:WAROOT
- S/MS:MSHULMAN
EUR/SOV:WSHINN
EUR/CE:SKLINGAMAN
EUR/NE:WOOLFLEY
EA/J:EFEATHERSTONE
DOC:SMARCUSS
DOD/OASD/ISA:MOUNTAIN

-----058887 261420Z /43

R 260016Z JUL 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 188214

EXCON OECD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: EQUIP, ETRD, US, FR, UK, IT, GW, GA, UR

SUBJECT: COOPERATION OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS IN DENIAL OF
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PAGE 02 STATE 188214

COMPUTER SALE TO TASS

1. EMBASSY REQUESTED TO SEEK APPOINTMENT AT MFA POLITICAL
COUSELOR LEVEL IN ORDER TO DELIVER FOLLOWING ORAL MESSAGE:
QUOTE. PRESIDENT CARTER DECIDED LAST WEEK TO DENY AN
APPLICATION BY THE US COMPUTER FIRM SPERRY UNIVAC TO SELL
COMPUTER SYSTEM TO THE USSR NEWS ORGANIZATION TASS. RECENT

PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE SOVIET UNION REMAINS INTERESTED IN PURCHASING A SIMILAR COMPUTER INSTALLATION FROM OTHER COMMERCIAL SOURCES. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT BELIEVES IT IMPORTANT THAT SUCH AN INSTALLATION NOT BE SOLD TO TASS AND REQUESTS THE COOPERATION OF YOUR GOVERNMENT IN REFRAINING FROM LICENSING THE EXPORT OF A COMPARABLE COMPUTER SYSTEM. UNQUOTE.

2. YOU SHOULD INDICATE THAT WE ARE ALSO RAISING THIS MATTER BILATERALLY WITH THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UK, FRG, FRANCE, AND JAPAN. WHILE WE ARE NOT REQUESTING FORMAL REPLIES, WE DO WANT TO MAKE CLEAR THE PARTICULAR INTEREST WE HAVE IN PARALLEL ACTION CONCERNING THIS IMPORTANT CASE AND WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING INFORMAL REACTIONS.

3. IF ASKED, EMBASSIES MAY DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING: THE SPERRY UNIVAC COMPUTER SYSTEM UNDER CONSIDERATION INCLUDED TWO CENTRAL PROCESSING UNITS, EACH WITH A PROCESSING DATA RATE OF 15.97 MILLION BITS PER SECOND, FOR TOTAL PDR OF 31.94, I.E. CLOSE TO THE UPPER LIMIT OF 32 IN ITEM 1565, NOTE 12 ON FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION BY COCOM. OTHER FEATURES EXCEED NOTE 12 LIMITS, IN PARTICULAR THE "TOTAL EFFECTIVE BIT TRANSFER RATE" TO NUMEROUS PERIPHERAL UNITS WHICH WAS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN THAT APPROVED FOR ANY PREVIOUS COMPUTER SALE TO THE USSR. THUS, ALTHOUGH THE APPLICATION WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 188214

DENIED ON FOREIGN POLICY GROUNDS, THE SYSTEM WAS ORDERLINE IN TERMS OF STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS.

4. FYI. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT PRODUCTIVE IN THESE BILATERAL MEETINGS TO ENGAGE IN LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF THE BACKGROUND LEADING TO PRESIDENT'S DECISION. OUR IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE IS TO AVOID THE UNDERMINING OF THIS DECISION WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM THE LICENSING OF THE EXPORT OF A COMPARABLE COMPUTER BY ANOTHER WESTERN GOVERNMENT. WE HOPE THAT A LOW-KEY APPROACH AT THIS STAGE, WITHOUT ASKING FOR FORMAL REPLIES, WILL BE SUFFICIENT FOR HOST GOVERNMENTS TO DISCOURAGE THEIR FIRMS FROM SELLING A SIMILAR COMPUTER SYSTEM.

5. PRESS REPORTS SUGGEST THAT THE USSR HAS ALREADY APPROACHED SIEMENS ABOUT BUYING A SIMILAR COMPUTER FOR TASS. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE CONTINUED POST REPORTING CONCERNING POSSIBLE SALE TO TASS BY SIEMENS OR OTHER COMPUTER FIRMS. VANCE

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 26 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Enclosure: ALO FOR USOECD
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Expiration:
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ISecure: 1
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